

Serial No.: 10/001,966

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of the claims under 35 USC §§ 102 and 103 as unpatentable over the references of record.

The claims as amended are limited to systems that use sedimentation techniques without centrifugation to separate red blood cells from a washing solution. This is important because systems that operate without centrifugation are much more simple mechanically and less expensive.

The references of record are quite different from that claimed in that they are directed to systems that employ centrifugation to separate the red blood cells. See, for example the '318 patent at column 2, lines 25+ and the '147 patent at column 6, lines 6+. Moreover, the references of record do not teach that the anticoagulant employed has any effect on gravity sedimentation and thus does not teach the invention.

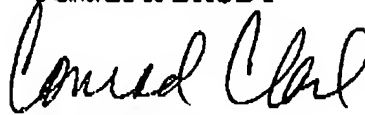
The primary anticoagulant in use today is ACD, and applicants have discovered that the gravity sedimentation techniques wherein ACD is the anticoagulant are not reliable. Because the references do not teach the selection as set forth in the claims, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been led to the invention.

Accordingly, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication thereof is respectfully requested. The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if any matter remains outstanding.

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All necessary extensions of time are requested. Please charge any necessary fees and credit any excess to deposit account 50-1088.

Respectfully Submitted,
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